

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

His anger may be dispelled, and your brightness shine forth upon us as of old; and the wandering stars in the firmament of the Church shine out in their places for ever, according to the word of the prophet: *And the stars have given light in their watches^ and rejoiced; they were called^ and they said: Here we are; and with cheerfulness they have shined forth to Him that made them.*"ⁱ

The younger monks were greatly moved by Stefano's letter, and would probably have answered in the same spirit, had it not been for the strenuous opposition of their old and venerated head, Dom Guillaume. But, in the June of this same year, 1402, the latter died, and was succeeded as prior of the Grande Chartreuse, and prior-general of the whole order under the obedience of Benedict XIII, by Boniface Ferrer, the brother of St. Vincent. Stefano had not long to wait for a more favourable opportunity to renew his appeal.

After the short and stormy pontificate of Innocent VII (Cosma Meliorati of Sulmona, who succeeded Boniface IX in 1404), Angelo Correr, then Patriarch of Constantinople, who had been closely associated with Catherine's surviving followers in Venice, was elected Pope by the cardinals of the Roman obedience, in November, 1406, and took the name of Gregory XII. He had previously taken an oath to abdicate, as soon as his rival should abdicate or die, and to make no new cardinals. An old man, of high repute for holiness, the cardinals had elected him, as they declared, less as Pope than as a commissioner for the restoration of unity. He at once expressed his eagerness to meet and confer with Benedict, declaring that he would go in a fishing-boat, if no galley were available, or on foot with his staff, if he could not get a horse. And Benedict, on his part, professed himself no less ready and eager for an interview.

Thus two men now faced each other, both of whom had received Catherine's words while she yet lived; for in each of them she had seen a possible reformer of the Church. And it is ¹ Earth. Senensis, *of cit.*, Lib. III. cap. 2. 400